

Arboretum News

Summer 1998

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE CALIFORNIA ARBORETUM FOUNDATION

50 Years of Plants and People - California Arboretum Foundation 1948-1998

Monitoring by Mapping

All life on earth is part of one great, interdependent system. It interacts with, and depends on the non-living components of the planet: atmosphere, oceans, freshwaters, rocks, and soils. Humanity depends totally on this community of life, this biosphere, of which we are an integral part. Biological diversity, or biodiversity, is the variety of the world's organisms, including their genetic diversity and the assemblages they form. It is the blanket term for the natural biological wealth that undergirds human life and well-being. The breath of the concept reflects the inter-relatedness of genes, species, and ecosystems."

World Resource Institute

In this 50th anniversary year of The Arboretum, poised on the edge of a new millennium, it serves us well to remember why our institution exists. You may well have your own definition based on your own use, but The Arboretum is more than any single use made of it.

The Arboretum is, first and foremost, a public botanic garden. As such, it is defined as a museum specializing in long term collections of living plants organized into collections defined mainly by the politico-geographic origins of the plants. The collections include sub-tropical flora from Africa, the Asiatic/North American temperate zone, Australia, Mediterranean regions, and the Americas. A formal collection policy managed by a committee of staff and other professionals serves to

guide placement, composition, and interpretation. Researchers from around the world have access to this information, and, as plant conservation and study of habitats continue as important environmental issues, The Arboretum collections connect with a global scientific community.

The collections here, like those of many museums, must be monitored under the watchful eye of a curator. A specific example of curatorship can be observed most Thursday mornings when Senior Botanist, Dr. Jim Bauml, and trained volunteers appear among the plants looking to the casual visitor like a crew of surveyors. Their endeavor is called

"mapping", an activity necessary to maintain an accurate inventory of the collections.

The Arboretum grounds are divided into 304 quadrants, each 200 hundred feet square. During mapping, plants in each one of these sections are identified, and records constantly updated with new plants added and dead ones deleted. This information is entered into a computer database which, along with its precise location, includes each plant's accession number, genus, species,

author, family, cultivar, common name, nativity, and original source.

Using current data on a particular quadrant whose perimeter is marked by tightly-pulled measuring tapes, the mapping crew compares this information with what is found in the field. It is not unusual for them to discover that some plants have vanished from the previous

mapping of that quadrant and that others may have been planted and need to be added. Mislabelled individuals are properly named, and any missing identification tags are ordered, made, and placed during a succeeding week. Occasionally the crew locates a "phoenix" plant, one previously reported dead, but that has miraculously reappeared.

This task also yields the bonus of finding collectible seeds of unusual plants worthy of seed exchange or on-site propagation.

Science puts the "botany" into botanical gardens, out of bio-molecular laboratories and into the field. And yet, as a public botanic garden, The Arboretum serves more than the scientific community because it may also be defined by its many audiences. Gardeners, horticulturists,

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Continued from front page

educators, bird-watchers, students, artists, and casual visitors and families use the plant collections for their aesthetic and educational value. Similarly, the collection of historic structures such as the Hugo Reid Adobe and the Queen Anne Cottage, appeals to different audiences and instructs on the legacy of land use in Southern California as a series of settlers, from pre-Columbian times to the present, imposed their needs and values upon the natural environment.

The Arboretum is a unique and valuable resource as an environmental museum and public botanic garden. It demonstrates to its many audiences the inter-relatedness of plants, animal life, and people. As we turn the corner toward a new century, the diversity of plant life that teaches and entertains us also serves to preserve bio-diversity and meet even other human needs for generations to come. 🌱

Fifth Annual Tour and Taste Summer Evenings

Four Thursday Evenings

Tour, 6 p.m. Taste, 7:15 p.m.

\$30 per person or \$100 for complete series
RSVP to the CAF at (626) 447-8207

THURSDAY, JULY 9

A Victorian Visit

Step back in time to the Victorian era in The Arboretum's own Queen Anne Cottage. With historical curator, Sandy Snider, tour the home that Lucky Baldwin built in 1885 as a honeymoon gift for his fourth wife. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the cottage is now surrounded by an authentic turn of the century garden which is also part of the tour.

THURSDAY, JULY 23

Murder in the Garden

Many mystery writers love to dabble in the field of botany in order to use poisons and potions in the commitment of mayhem. Use of botanical names and garden lore often add unusual dimension to a mystery book, much to the delight of the reader, especially one who has a passion for gardening. *Murder in the Garden* takes you through the intricacies of this procedure, while visiting a special Arboretum garden.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6

Special Trees of The Arboretum

An Arboretum is a place where different types of trees and shrubs are grown for study and display. When The Arboretum was established fifty years ago it was with the major purpose of preserving the many specimens trees and shrubs that were planted by Lucky Baldwin in the 1870's. Learn about the trees at The Arboretum ... which is the oldest? which is the tallest? which are the most unique? which ones were introduced at The Arboretum and more ... Arboretum botanists Dr. Jim Bauml and Dr. Jerry Turney take us on our tree adventure.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20

Tram and Travelogue

The always popular tram tour of the gardens highlights the unique geophysical arrangement of our collections. Travel from one continent to another with guide Nelson Holmes for a world tour of The Arboretum. Journey through the garden's Australian, North and South American, Asiatic, African and Mediterranean sections and end the tour with dinner on the terrace of the Peacock Cafe. 🌱

ARBOR DAY 1998



More than 90 students from Hugo Reid Elementary School in Arcadia came to The Arboretum for an arbor day celebration and to plant their own flowering tree expected to bloom next year. After the planting of the 'Alma Stultz' flowering nectarine tree, the 5th grade students continued their celebration with a tour of The Arboretum. 🌱



Favorite Lavenders for the Summer Garden

by Jan Smithen, a regular contributor to the Arboretum News

Everybody loves the fragrance of lavender and when you learn how easy it is to grow, you just have to plant one. But so many gardeners have told me they've planted lavender, and then been disappointed in the scent. My answer is always the same: You just haven't planted the right lavender! So let me give you a few hints on what lavenders to choose and to how to grow them so you'll get the best from them.

The genus *Lavandula* is a big one and there are many species and named cultivars. On top of that, they have a tendency to cross hybridize naturally in the garden and volunteer seedlings seem to pop up regularly. So, naturally, there's much to choose from and it's easy to get a non-scented one, if that's what you're looking for. So buy your lavender from a good nursery or mail order house that labels plants with botanical names. Don't buy that pretty plant labeled "Lavender."

You'll be attracted to Fernleaf

lavender, *Lavandula multifida*, right in its nursery can. Its bright blue-purple flower spikes are striking against its soft ferny foliage, and it blooms all year round in Southern California. Easy to grow and beautiful,

Everybody loves the fragrance of lavender and when you learn how easy it is to grow, you just have to plant one.

alas it has no scent!

French lavender, *L. dontata*, is also an easy and reliable plant which blooms all the time. Its flowering spikes are a soft smoky lavender color and look lovely against its gray foliage. An outstanding landscape and garden plant, its scent is almost menthol.

The new *L. 'Goodwin Creek Gray'* has

deep violet flowering spikes against silvery foliage. The plants makes a beautiful statement in the garden because it also blooms off and on all year. Too bad, it also smells of Vicks!

Then there is Spanish

lavender, *L. stoechas*. It blooms in spring with little squared off bloom spikes topped by a gay bunch of ribbon-like petals in royal purple. But don't grow it for fragrance, because it smells like camphor. In fact, it used to be used by thrifty housewives as a moth repellent because its scent intensifies when dried.

The very best, sweetest and intense fragrances are produced by English lavenders, *L. angustifolia*. Sometimes these will be labeled *L. vera* or *L. spica*, and they don't look like much in their nursery pot. Most people just pass them by.

I have several favorite varieties good for making potpourri or stuffing into lavender pillows: 'Hidcote', 'Munstead', 'Jean Davis', 'Martha Roderick' and 'Twickle Purple'. Except for 'Twickle Purple', they are small growers, never getting more than 10 inches high. And they have gotten the ill deserved reputation of being hard to grow. You must

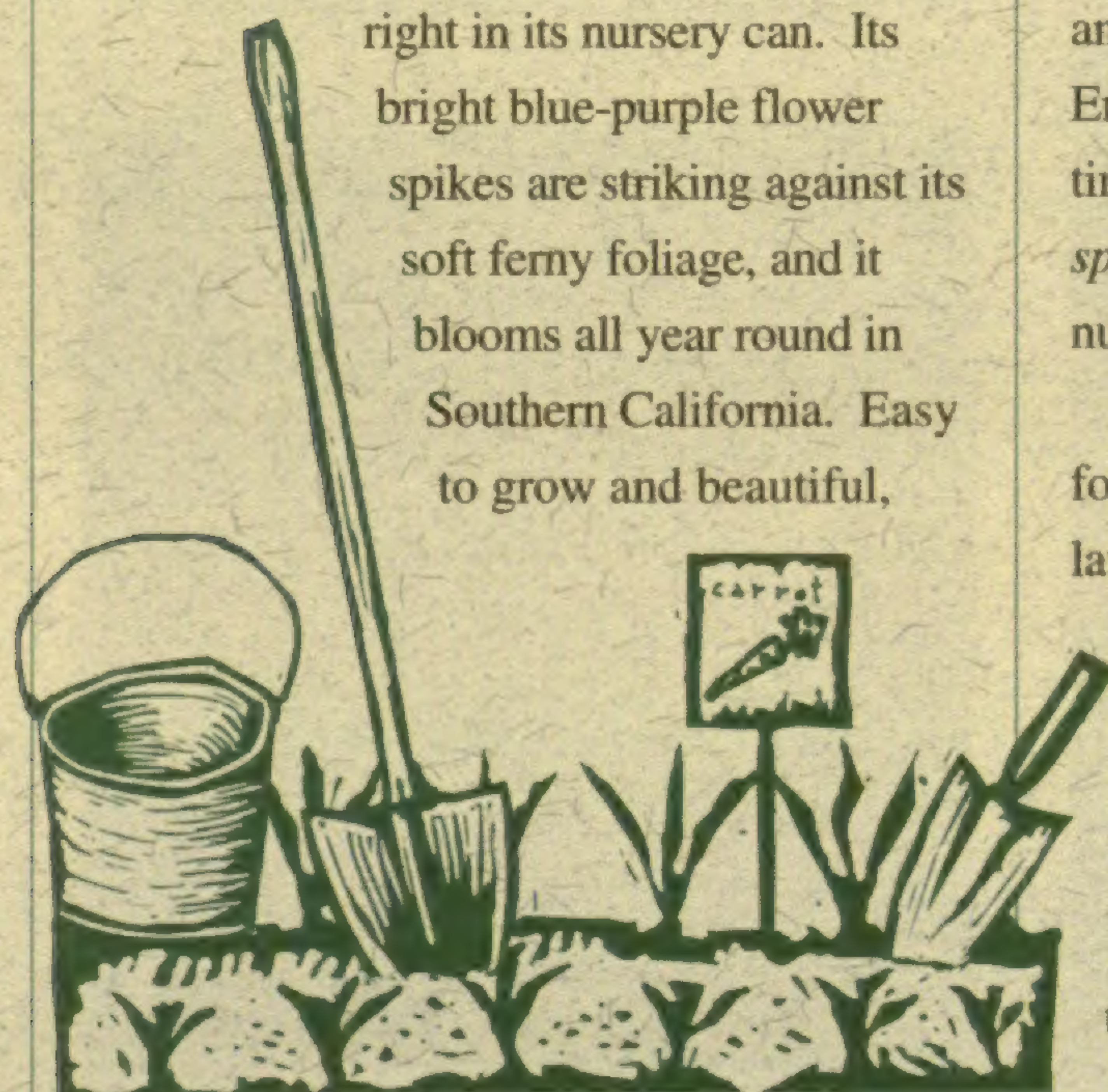
remember to plant them where they'll have excellent drainage and not too much summer water.

But the varieties of *L x intermedia* are also sweetly fragrant, and my favorite for making bunches of dried lavender of the sweet little lavender wands so beloved by Victorian ladies. These are the Lavandin grown in France for the perfume industry. Such cultivars as 'Provence', 'Grosso', 'Dutch', 'Hidcote Giant', 'Alba' and the new 'Fred Boutin' produce masses of long stemmed blooms in summer. Pick them, as they do in Provence, early in the day just as they are coming into full bloom and you will have long lasting fragrance. Lavender blooms do not need to be hung or dried, but only bundled together with raffia, trimmed and laid side by side or placed in a vase.

All lavenders need full sun and good drainage. Too much water during the summer can cause dieback, even plant death. Never fertilize lavenders; they like a lean stony soil. And don't be disappointed if

your lavandin do not bloom in first summer. They sometimes need to be established before they get around to flowering. If you want a tight compact lavender with even more flowers next year, you must remember to cut your plant back hard after it blooms. This way, you'll have a beautiful garden companion and a houseful of fragrance.

Jan Smithen has a video called "Lavender in the Garden" showing all the kinds of lavender, how to grow it, prune it and propagate it. It is for sale in The Arboretum Gift Shop. 🌿



Festival of Plants Baldwin Bonanza XXVIII

Baldwin Bonanza Festival of Plants celebrated twenty-eight years at its annual preview party and plant sale.

This year Arboretum orchids were available in limited numbers for sale. Among those featured were the Paphiopedilum, Cymbidium, Oncidium, Phalenopsis, Dendrobium, and miscellaneous species which also included various genera.

New this year were the Baldwin Lavender Collection, Baldwin Salvia Collection and the Baldwin Perennial Collection. Also new were garden displays such as the Wildlife Garden, the Hummingbird Garden, the Sunset Garden

and the Drought Tolerant Garden. The displays were designed as useful suggestions to Baldwin Bonanza shoppers on how various plants can be combined and grown together.

The preview party on Friday night brought fabulous weather and an opportunity to purchase plants before opening to the



public on Saturday. Party-goers also participated in the traditional silent auction that included items such as a one week stay on a 16,000 acre historic working cattle ranch in Oregon, garden fountains, a hand-painted ceramic pot, tree and shrub consultation by Finch Tree Surgery, bird baths and bird feeders, staghorn ferns, and two tickets to the Los Angeles Garden



Show Preview Party Night.

Live music was provided by the Patrick Plunkett Jazz Trio while guests strolled the plant collections grazing on delicious food samplings from a variety of restaurants such as Abiento, Chez Sateau, Dickenson West, Europe Bakery, Hugo Molina, Panda Inn, The Parkway Grill, Pinot at the Chronicle, Restaurant Lozano and Simply Unique Catering.

Culinary delights included smoked salmon mousse, crispy duck cakes, chocolate almond cake, tricolor shrimp ravioli, chicken pan fried dumplings, crab cakes, grilled vegetable lasagna, french farinnettes-griddle cakes and a wide selection of cookies and dessert bars.

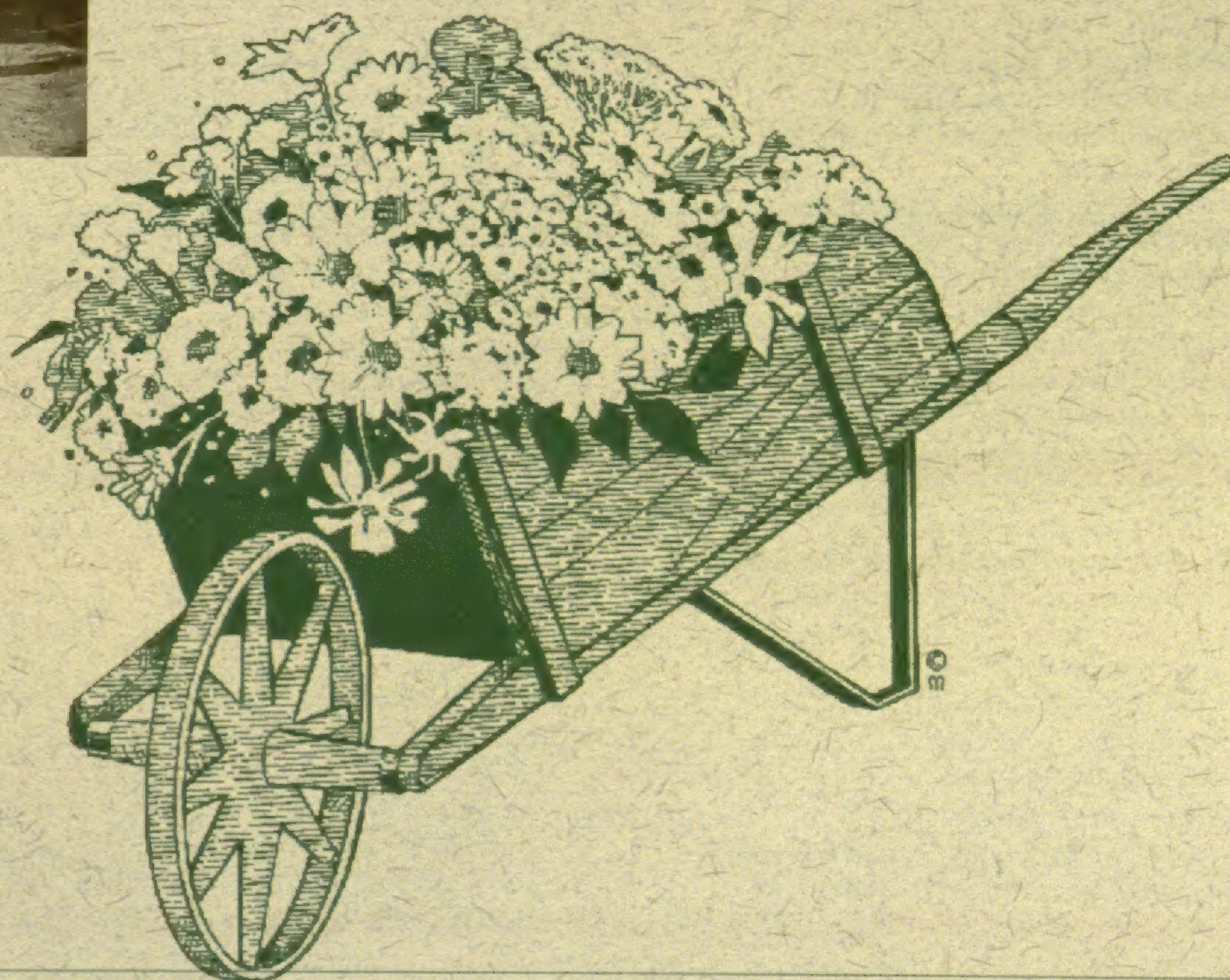
The Baldwin Bonanza Festival of



Plants represents a long tradition of success as an annual fundraising event to benefit The Arboretum of Los Angeles

County. This year's event is expected to raise more than \$40,000 toward educational programs, gardening staff, garden maintenance, special collections and new projects.

See you next year! 🌻



*Thank you to the following members and companies who donated financial support
and in-kind services at the 1998 Baldwin Bonanza Festival of Plants*

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Gardening Quiz

For fun, test your gardening knowledge. See answers below.

1. What common plant name comes from the French word for thought?
2. Just from the name, what color is the flower of *Hymenoporus flavum*?
3. What part of the rhubarb plant do you eat?
4. Which is not in the rose family?
 - a) strawberry
 - b) apple
 - c) blueberry
 - d) blackberry

5. What summer-blooming, flowering tree has varieties named for Native American tribes?

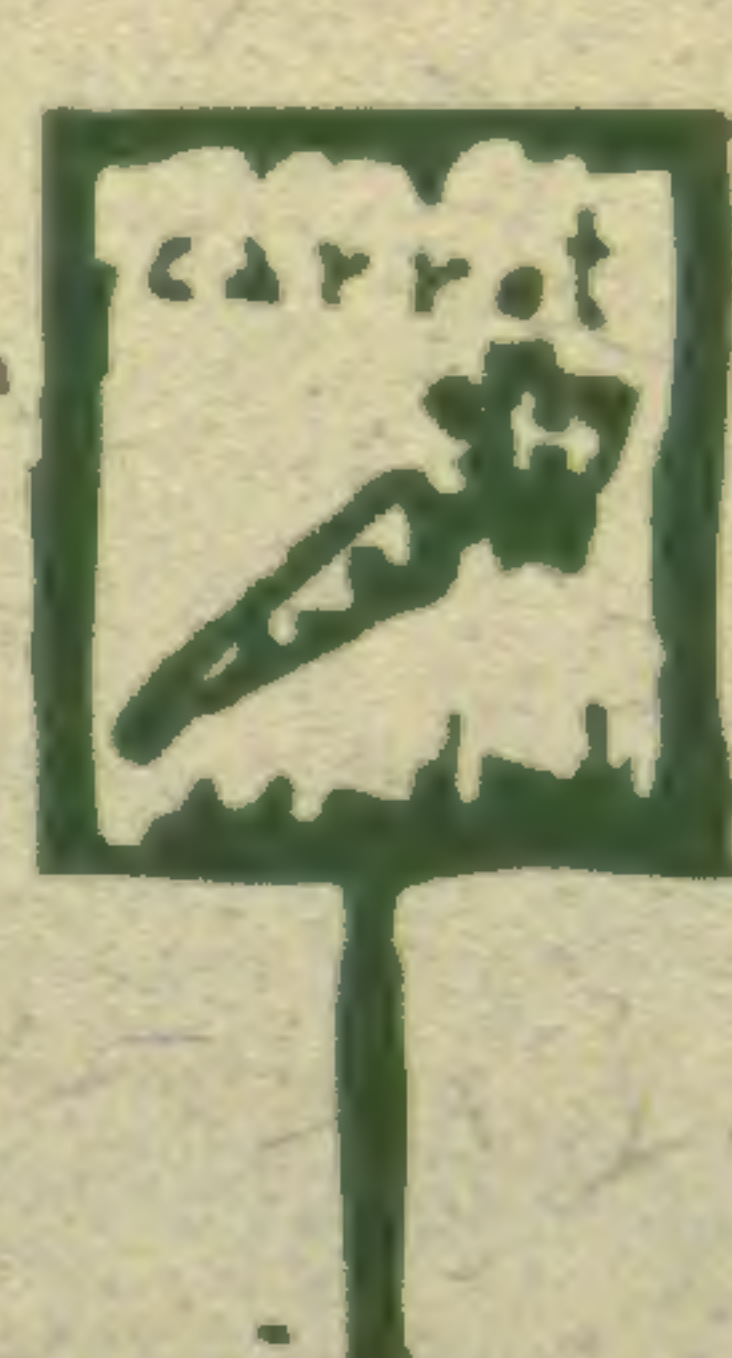
6. Which one is a kiwi?
 - a) Barbados gooseberry
 - b) Cape gooseberry
 - c) Chinese gooseberry

Compiled by Joan DeFato,

Plant Science Librarian

The Arboretum of Los Angeles County

Answers: 1. pansy 2. yellow 3. petiole (leaf stalk) 4. c - blueberry 5. crape myrtle 6. c - Chinese gooseberry



Greetings from The Arboretum Gift Shop

Our seasonal cycle provides a new look for the Gift Shop, with a superb shipment of Great Garden Granite crafted to furnish a lift for your summer garden. The natural stone fountains are favorites of ours, second only to the Oribe Lanterns and Kusaya Stone House. Those of you taking Ikebana classes will most certainly appreciate the polished stone vases.



Get Festive This Summer. Let gardening go right to your head with our "Botanical Bonnets." We have selected a variety of Panamas and gathered our crafts group together to decorate. You will be delighted with the results.



And finally, our summer vision expands even further when the Mid Valley Art League exhibits at our shop on

Saturday and

Sunday, June 6 & 7.



A shopper's post script

Our annual Month Long Sale begins May 31 with ten to forty percent off all purchases. California Arboretum Foundation (CAF) members enjoy an additional ten percent off, making this most definitely the time to take stock of your Home and Garden needs. This sale runs through the Month of June.

Visit the CAF Website at www.arboretum.org



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